

Between Love and War

by elemental of fire

Category: Halo

Genre: Adventure, Humor

Language: English

Status: In-Progress

Published: 2006-03-28 10:29:01

Updated: 2006-03-28 10:29:01

Packaged: 2016-04-27 00:01:03

Rating: T

Chapters: 6

Words: 9,891

Publisher: www.fanfiction.net

Summary: As Spartan is searching for a lost answer, he finds his match, in a very capable woman.

1. Trouble Comes In All Sizes

Chapter 1: Trouble Comes In All Sizes

****Whoop Whoop Whoop... **Stupid Aliens.**

As I stood up the bed creaked with gratitude from its release of my weight. Walking over to my armor cabinet was alot easier than walking with my armor. I am the only soldier who is genetically, biologically and technically engineered, designed to fight and defend till death (In my case many times). I was still like a normal human (Plus better vision, hearing, accuracy and a hell of alot stronger).

****Whoop Whoop Whoop... ****

I never realized how that alarm could be so annoying. Reaching forward I placed my hand on the Identification Pad shaped as a hand to recognize it was me. (What if those aliens could clone my hand? I could definitely use another firing arm). The sheet of titanium slid silently away revealing a bulky, strong, army green full length suit of armor. I reached in and pulled it out. Once in it, I felt the weight on every step.

****Beep Beep****

I knew what that was. I turned to look at a large disc shaped table. A blue light fizzled to life within it and there stood a woman.

"You're a bit slow today aren't you?" she asked cocking her head to one side. She was a program in the shape of a short-haired woman to run all our space stations, equipment and extremely large weapons.

"You would too if you weighed half a ton, Cortana," I replied sarcastically, "What is it this time?"

"A few of the Covenant's ships trying to break the shield," she said casually.

"And the alarms?" I asked knowing the answer would be that at least one of them had managed to get on the station.

With an amusing sigh she replied "To get your lazy butt moving and help the marines defend this station, that's why."

****Spartan 117, report to the Bridge immediately****

Cortana looked at me. "See you there, and...oh...by the way, pick up a gun on the way, Chief," she said before disappearing in a blue light.

Walking swiftly under my heavy weight, I advanced to the Armory where Dudley Parker was fiddling with a small blue coloured grenade.

"I'd be careful with that, does alot of damage when it's set off," I interrupted.

Parker jumped, almost knocking the grenade on the floor. "Geez you gave me a start there, Chief!" he said picking himself up.

"I need a gun," I said stiffly, still hearing the alarms ringing.

He ushered over to a large titanium sliding door with a small control panel nearby and pressed a few buttons. With a loud click, the door unlocked and slid aside. Parker ran in and a clatter of metal against metal was heard. A minute later, he returned with two guns.

"Well sir, you have a choice," He began lifting the guns in his hands for me to see, " You can have either the BR55 Rifle with 36 rounds or the M7/Caseless Machine Gun with 60 rounds."

I reached forward and took the Machine Gun from his hand and loaded it with a reassuring click.

Nodding to Parker, I left walking down the corridors towards the Bridge.

Once I got there the doors opened to reveal a huge room filled with large computer screens displaying pictures and maps.

"About time you got here," said a familiar voice, "Thought you turned chicken on us."

Turning around, I nodded to the dark-skinned Sergeant.

He puffed on his cigar and adjusted his hat before mumbling, "Those damn aliens don't know when to quit."

We walked over to a older man in uniform with several badges pinned to his chest pocket and saluted.

The General saluted back before saying, "I'll make this brief,

Cortana has informed me that two Covenant ships have broken our shield and are attempting to board us. Now Master Chief, as you have dealt with these aliens on board before, I am sending you and a team of Marines with you to stop them boarding this station."

He turned to the Sergeant. "I need you to take a team of marines to man the guns on the station," he ordered. The Sergeant & I saluted and walked out the door.

As I got outside the door, a group of ten Marines stood ready and armed. I walked through them and they followed.

"Got him!" shouted one of the marines who just splattered a small alien with his gun. We had reached the West Hanger and there were aliens everywhere. Small Grunts were no problem, they ran away and hid most of the time. Jackals had shields to protect them, but that was easily dealt with a couple hits with the barrel of the gun. Then there were the Elites. Faster, Stronger and Tougher than humans (Not for me of course). Takes a little more to kill, but not much of a threat to me.

After killing two Elites, five Grunts and a Jackal I felt pretty darn good. The alarms had stopped which meant there was no threat now. (Odd). I looked around making sure we had killed all of them. Yep (Very Odd). The General had said there were two ships boarding...

"Chief?" Cortana's voice came through my intercom.

"What is it Cortana?" I replied waiting for bad news.

"The General has asked you to return to the Bridge and don't worry about the second ship, it has been taken care of," she finished.

Five minutes later I walked through the Bridge doors. What could he possibly want me for? To go on a mission maybe.

As I walked up to the General, I noticed Cortana standing on a disc shaped table similiar to the one in my quarters.

"That was quick," she laughed.

I turned and looked at the General.

"Master Chief, I thank you again for another well done job ridding us of these aliens and protecting the station," he said proudly.

"But that's not why I am here, is it?" I asked, feeling there was something they weren't telling me.

The General and Cortana looked at each other and then looked at me.

"You are quite correct. We have reason to believe that the Covenant are building a huge army to destroy us," the General replied.

"Well, we all knew they would, but the unusual thing is how fast they seem to be reproducing. We have estimated with the rate of reproduction and ageing as it is, we have just under a month until they have enough power to eliminate our defences," Cortana explained

bringing up a map on a large computer screen in front of us, " There seems to be alot of activity coming from the far east Delta quadrant, from somewhere within the Horse-head Nebula. What it is, we don't know."

"Which is where you come in Master Chief," the General continued, "We need you and a team of Marines to investigate this sudden increase in their army. There seems to be a planet situated in it's core. Possibly the source of disruption."

"Yes sir," I replied and saluted. I turned around towards the door when I noticed a young woman with brown hair pulled back in a braid and blue eyes walking towards us.

She was not as tall as me (then again I'm not very tall), but she looked like she could cause some damage with a gun. I noticed a small bleeding cut just above the collar of her uniform.

"Ah, Master Chief, this is Major Rhea 001," the General introduced us, "Major, this is Master Chief Spartan 117."

She reached her hand forward for me to shake. I looked at her, not taking it.

"001?" I asked looking from her to the General.

"Ah yes, Major Rhea is the same as you Master Chief, but where she lacks strength, she makes up for her brilliant intelligence," he explained, "Which is why you will be partnered with her on your mission."

I looked back at Rhea. "I work alone," I said firmly.

2. Every Action Has A Reaction

****Chapter 2: Every Action Has A Reaction****

"Men!" I exclaimed pacing in my quarter's.

After my encounter with Spartan, I had become very frustrated with him. Had I actually been looking forward to meeting the famous Spartan 117, that had saved Earth countless times. But now, I realised, he was just plain selfish. He had told me that he didn't want me as a part of his team. But the good thing was the General had already decided that I was going to go on the mission whether Spartan liked it or not.

I started pulling on my armor. It was a darker shade of green than Spartan's armor, good for hiding in darker foliage. I was a better sniper than a hand to hand combatanest. I reached down under my bunk and pulled out a long, thin, dark blue gun. It's ammo glowing a bright purple. It was a Particle Beam Rifle. An alien sniper rifle. I had found it on a mission to retrieve alien technology from an abandoned Covenant drop ship called a Shadow. Many weapons had been taken in for examination, except for this gun. If anyone found I had "borrowed" it, I was in big trouble. I ran my hand over the smooth gun lovingly. I had modified it extensively because its ammo depleted too quickly. It generey ran on pure energy, but after hunting around for another energy source called slatia (A more commonly used ore for

energy and lasts 5 times longer than pure energy) which I found. I made it a much more powerful weapon than before.

****Beep Beep****

I quickly stashed the gun under my bunk and watched as the hologram pedestal fizzled to life with a blue light. Cortana appeared smiling.

"At least you're ready, the Chief hadn't even gotten into his armor when I just talked to him," she laughed.

I paused. Thinking about how he was going to treat me when we did start our mission.

"Nervous?" asked Cortana with a look of worry on her face.

I looked up at her. Did even computer programs express feelings?

"No, just... why doesn't Spartan like me?" I asked faltering.

She gave a casual smile and replied, "He is not used to being teamed with someone as his equal. Especially a woman."

I jerked my head away and replied stiffly, "He doesn't have to come on this mission. I accepted it first and was willing to do it on my own. I can look after myself."

A small thought came to her. Was she willing to do it on her own?

"He will most likely keep you away from danger, but criticize about you not doing anything," Cortana interrupted my thoughts, "It's a male thing. Anyway, report to the West Hanger where a ship is waiting for you."

The hologram pedestal turned off once Cortana disappeared. I quickly reached under my bed and pulled my rifle out and stashed it in a bag before walking out the door with it.

"What took you so long?" asked Spartan when I had arrived in the hanger.

I ignored him and boarded the ship. I found a seat close to the back of the ship, away from the Marines and Spartan.

I liked my privacy.

I strapped myself in and pulled a small, round, silver hologram pad out. After pressing a few buttons, a map of the planet we were heading too appeared. I held it tightly as I felt the ship move. Once we were far enough away from the station, we entered hyperspace.

I placed the pad on the seat next to me and pulled a book and pen out and wrote down some notes of the planet's terrain and weather.

I felt as if someone was watching me. I looked up. The Marines were too busy chatting about how many aliens they had killed. Spartan was sitting next to them but seemed quiet. Not looking up once.

I shrugged and began looking for any structures on the planet's surface.

I noticed the whole planet was entirely made up of water. But because of the cold climate in the Nebula, it had frozen it over becoming a frozen wasteland.

Looking again, I found two separate ruins joined together by a bridge.

I stopped looking. I had translated some alien text from a temple, worshipping something called an "Ark."

I flicked back through my book looking for the right page. Once I found it, in my mind I read:

_Oh holy Ark, _

Cleanse our worlds,

Rid us of Flood,

And burn those unworthy for the journey.

Two ruins,

One bridge,

Light and Darkness,

Find Answers..

What on earth did that mean? I read it through several times.

Oh holy Ark

Cleanse our worlds...

I tapped my pencil on the paper.

Ark? As in Noah's Ark maybe? And cleansing our worlds? It didn't make sense.

I continued reading..

Rid us of Flood

And burn those unworthy for the journey...

Flood...water. Rid us of water?

> And burn those unworthy.<p>

I looked up to the ceiling thinking deeply.

Since it was obviously an alien that had written it, those unworthy looked like it was us.

I looked back to the page. The next two lines seemed to match the structures on the planet's surface.

_Two ruins _

One bridge...

Then the last two?

Light and Darkness

Find Answers...

Looking at the hologram pad featuring the planet's terrain, I pressed a couple of symbols on the hologram. The picture changed to show an infrared picture of the planet.

Deep blue in colour meant the coldest temperatures and white/red meant the hottest.

The entire planet was a deep blue. It was deserted.

"How can thinking so much not hurt you?" a familiar voice asked.

I jumped at the sudden friendliness the voice had. Looking up, I found myself looking at Spartan's bright orange visor.

He took a seat next to me and started looking at the hologram.

"No life signs heh?" He asked leaning back, "Will make my job easier."

Not looking at him, I replied, "If you call trudging through thick ice and snow easy."

I pulled my helmet off, starting to feel a little warm in the face.

He leaned forward and pointed a finger at my neck.

"Nice cut, how did you earn that one? Blowing up a lab?" he joked.

I shook my head. "No. When I landed in the East Hanger, the Covenant Ship had already docked. We were attacked and an Elite came this close...", I said indicating a small space with my thumb and finger, "...too having my neck broken. It only scratched me."

His shoulders seemed to suddenly droop then straighten again. (Was that pity he just showed? It couldn't of been.)

"It's alright though, we killed them all," I continued, "You've probably suffered worse than a minor scratch."

He shrugged and leant back, not saying anything.

I placed my helmet back on as we felt a bump.

"We are entering the planet's atmosphere. Hold on!" announced the pilot.

I quickly grabbed the hologram pad, my pen and paper and shoved them into my bag.

Spartan strapped himself into the seat.

"We're coming in too fast! Brace yourselves!" yelled the pilot.

I quickly braced myself thinking, save us.

3. The Icy Grave

****Chapter 3:The Icy Grave****

"Ow..." I groaned.

I opened my eyes, hearing a high pitched beeping. My shield had been slightly damaged. I would have to get one of the Marines to fix it.

I jerked my head up and realized that I was lying on snow.

"Marines!" I yelled waiting for an answer.

A snow storm was just starting to pick up. I couldn't see two metres in front of me.

"This is Master Chief to Marines, can you hear me?" I spoke into my intercom.

No answer.

I peered into the fog looking for any signs of movement.

None.

I stood up and walked forward against the wind towards a large dark object looming nearby.

As soon as I got near it, I realized it was the ship.

I ran to the door and looked inside. There was no one in the ship. I quickly looked around the ship to see if anyone had survived.

I could here the storm's intensity rise. I was just about to head into the ship when I heard a faint high pitched beeping.

I looked behind me to see a dark shape lying on the ground about five metres away.

I struggled against the strengthening wind towards them. I placed my hand onto their shoulder and rolled them over.

A bright blue visor gleamed up at me. Major Rhea.

I leaned forward and leaned her on my shoulder and quickly dragged her into the ship. I layed her onto the floor and quickly closed the door.

I pulled her helmet off and checked her breathing.

She rolled over and coughed several times.

I sat down on the floor and asked calmly, "You ok?"

She looked up and gave a faint smile and nodded.

"I'll live," she replied coughing.

I tilted my head a little and asked, "Doesn't seem like it. You should rest."

She pulled herself up so she was leaning against a wall.

"The Marines? Are they...?" she asked wiping her brow of a trickle of blood.

I looked down. "I don't know," I replied flatly.

The wind now howled outside.

"We won't know until this storm dies down, so might as well get some rest till then," I told her.

She nodded and layed onto the floor, not saying a word.

I leaned against the wall opposite her and felt my eyes get heavy as I drifted off.

I woke to a small movement and quickly reached for my gun and aimed towards it.

Rhea froze, halfway through picking up a ration bar from her bag.

I relaxed. "Sorry, thought you were something else," I replied, a little embarrassed.

"Thought you might be hungry," she replied, throwing me a ration bar.

I caught it with one hand and layed my gun down with the other.

It was morning. The storm had passed.

I pulled my helmet off and breathed the cooler air. Then I peeled the wrapper from the ration bar and threw it away. Taking a large bite from the bar, I began gulping it down.

Rhea seemed to be taking smaller bites and chewing longer.

"What you doing that for?" I asked with a mouthful.

She swallowed her food and replied, "You never know if this could be your last meal. I don't want to take the chance."

I had already finished mine. I didn't care if it was my last meal. The feeling of triumph of killing something before you die was an insatiable meal, that maybe one day will happen.

She finished her food and stood up. She grabbed her helmet off the seat next to her and pulled it on. Then reached into her bag for a

gun. A BR55 Rifle.

I pulled my helmet back on and picked up my machine gun.

Rhea grabbed her hologram pad out before putting her bag on her back.

I pulled open the ship's door. A thin sheet of snow trickled off it. The seemed to be light coming from a star several lightyears away, which lit up the snow.

I walked out into the complete whiteness with Rhea behind me.

Several hours later, no sign of the Marines.

"Could they have gotten out of the crash alive?" asked Rhea observing her hologram map.

"There was no sign of blood in the ship to suggest anyone got hurt," I replied walking onwards.

As we kept walking, I notced a very large looming object in the distance.

"Any idea what that is?" asked Rhea, pointing towards it.

She looked up and then looked back at her map, tapping several buttons.

"The North and South Ruins," she whispered.

"The North and South Ruins. What is that?" I asked stopping and looking at her.

"Oh, just something I've read," she quickly said, before walking past me. I followed.

The Ruins were very big once we got close enough. It looked extremely old. In most places, crumbling to dust. They were joined together by a large bridge that seemed to also be falling apart.

We walked up the stairs into the Entrance of the North Ruin.

It seemed to be quite dark. So we turned our lights on our guns on.

Rhea led. We winded through the corridors of mouldy stone.

"What are looking for?" I asked starting to get tired of walking in circles.

"Anything that will explain why this is here," she replied.

After an hour, we finally made it through the first ruin. We walked out of the back door towards the large bridge.

"So, next one I guess," I said tiredly.

She nodded and began walking slowly over the bridge, listening to the

bridge slowly breaking. I walked behind her, watching my every step. I looked over the side of the bridge to see ice covered by a thin sheet of snow.

I hurried over to the other side. If I fell into the water with my armor on, I would sink to my death.

We searched the entire South ruin and found nothing. There was no door on the other side of this ruin, so we walked back towards the bridge.

When we got to the bridge I turned around and said to Rhea, "Well, that was a waste of time."

"I don't understand," she replied, "We should of found something, the writing said so."

"Well we didn't. This is why I work alone. I don't have some...female, telling me what to do and getting us lost," I said angrily looking at her.

"Why you... If that's so, why didn't you leave me to die out in the storm!" she replied furiously.

"Because...", I replied, lost for words.

"Well fine then. I'll stay here and you can go find the Marines and leave me here to study. At least I'm out of your hair," she said calmly walking back into the South Ruin.

"Fine then!" I said walking back over the bridge.

I couldn't believe that we wasted so much time looking for nothing, when we could've been looking for the Marines. I fumed.

As I got over the other side of the bridge. An huge figure stepped out of the North Ruin door, blocking my path.

It was a Hunter. A huge alien capable of crushing you to a bloody pulp with one massive swing of its arm. It also carried a large weapon called a Fuel Rod Cannon that could kill with one hit.

It swung it's large arm towards me as I just narrowly missed it. I pulled my gun out and opened fire on it. The bullets bounced of its near-impenetrable armor. It took another swing and took a step forward. The ground beneath us trembled. I jumped back from it's swing and shot at the orange flesh showing near it's stomach area, as it gave a horrifying roar. Orange blood squirted out as the creature smashed a wall nearby, showering me in stone. It caught me off guard as it knocked another wall on top of me. The gun slipped out of my hands and slid across the stone out of my reach. The Hunter now started swinging its arm at the wall protecting me. I couldn't move from underneath it, as the creature continued to try smashing it apart. My shields beeping violently. Any second now, I was gonna die.

****Swish...Swish...****

The Hunter gave a almighty cry of pain. The wall had broken in two on my back, leaving one hit left to kill. I crawled out from underneath

to see what had made the creature cry out in pain. Then I saw who it was.

It was Rhea.

She stood on the highest point of the bridge, holding what seemed to be an alien sniper rifle. She had wounded the Hunter by firing into it's most vulnerable spot. Its flesh.

I watched as she fired two more rounds into the Hunter's soft flesh. More blood spilled everywhere. Then she had to reload. The Hunter had her now. It was injured, but it's weapon wasn't. It charged up and it's long green burning ammunition flew towards her.

"Rhea! Watch Out!" I yelled.

She looked up from reloading just in time to see it and narrowly missing it, she jumped out of the way. I could hear her shield going offline.

The Hunter now charged at her. Its every step shaking the stone bridge. Rhea quickly stood and aimed at the Hunter. It drew closer and closer. The bridge now beginning to fall to pieces.

Then she fired. One hit into the last intact piece of orange flesh of the Hunter. Its dying cry like nothing ever heard of. It crashed to the ground just metres from Rhea. The bridge shook violently and there was a large **crack **of the bridge breaking apart underneath the Hunter's body. The bridge gave way as the Hunter's body fell and crashed through the ice and into the dark freezing water below.

I watched in horror as the stone beneath Rhea fell apart. She fell through.

"Spartan!" she screamed before plunging into the icy water.

I layed there shaking.

Rhea was dead. Because of me.

My shields had come back online.

She had saved me. Even after we argued, she still cared.

How could anyone care for me?

Footsteps were coming towards me from the North Ruins.

Let them kill me. I didn't care anymore. The taste for killing before death was gone from me.

The footsteps came closer and I could hear muffled voices.

Make it quick and painless, I thought, like Rhea's.

The footsteps stopped as they came through the door.

Someone barked orders in a weird language.

I was hauled up over two other's shoulders and taken out of the

Ruins.

I was too exhausted to lift my head, let alone open my eyes.

They dragged me onto their ship and placed me in a tank.

They pulled my helmet and armor off and placed a mask over my mouth and nose.

The tank slowly filled with a warm liquid. I breathed a sweet air coming from the mask and fell asleep.

4. An Unexpected Meeting

****Chapter 4: An Unexpected Meeting****

I must be dead.

It was completely black. I seemed to be floating through the darkness.

Where was I? Where was Spartan?

Spartan...

Why had I cared so much about him. I knew he hated me, but I still couldn't let him die.

I pictured in my mind, the first time I saw his face in the Marine's ship that morning. His blonde hair cut short, but had small curls in it. His warm smile. His blue eyes that held hurt in them.

My memories of him were all that was left.

Suddenly, a blue light seemed to come from nowhere. It drifted towards me slowly.

A voice in my mind said to follow it. So I did.

I slowly floated towards it. Then it seemed to start moving away from me.

Wait...my thoughts yelled out

It stopped and turned, shining me with its bright blue light.

Help me...I tried to say, but nothing came out.

Suddenly, there was an explosion of white light . I covered my eyes as I was engulfed in it.

I opened my eyes slowly.

I was in a room filled with large computer screens. They showed Alien text on them and something else...

A gentle humming filled the room. Someone was here.

I sat up and reached into my backpack for my gun, when I realized

that my bag was missing.

I looked up to hear the humming stop and light laughing sound.

The sounds came from what looked like a big floating ball with a flashing blue lightbulb at the front.

"You're awake at last. Finally, someone with more questions," it said gleefully.

I stood up and looked at it.

"Who are you?" I asked looking at the lightbulb which was probably its eye.

"Why, I am the Oracle. It has been quite some time you took to get here from the second Halo, but I knew you would've figured it out eventually," it replied, making light of the subject.

"Wait. The second Halo? But I have never even seen any of the Halo's," I told the Oracle.

It looked at me for a moment before replying, "You are correct. Your genetic makeup is different to the one they call 'Chief'."

"Spartan..." I said aloud.

It ignored my musings and continued talking.

"Well did you wish to know where the Ark is. I can show you if you like," it asked in a know-it-all voice.

"The Ark? What's this Ark?" I asked urgently, remembering the Alien prophecy.

The Oracle turned to the largest computer screen to my right and brought up a rotating 3D image of a large floating structure.

"It has the ability to activate all Halos, itself also a device to destroy within a 3 galacti radius. It has a timer set on it also so to ensure that if The Covenant didn't activate the Halo's, the Ark will," It said joyfully.

I looked at it. "Who would make such a thing?" I asked slightly terrified now.

"Why, the Ancestors, of course," it replied looking at me.

"The Ancestors? Were they Aliens aswell?" I asked thoughtfully.

"I am unable to answer that question. For you see, it was the Ancestors that created myself also and have wiped any knowledge of them from my system," it said slightly annoyed at the fact it couldn't answer my question.

"Well I need to stop it anyway. How do I get there?" I asked.

Suddenly, there was low growling coming from outside the stone walls

of the room.

"It seems The Flood have tracked your whereabouts. How facinating..." the Oracle drawled.

"The Flood?" I asked a little bit more shakily.

"Yes, the reason the Halo's were made was to destroy all sentient life, which is what the Flood feed on," it replied casually.

"Sentient life wouldn't be...humans. Would it?" I asked listening to the creatures starting to break into the room.

"Of course," it replied, "As well as all other living things."

The pounding grew louder.

"Get me to Ark now!" I yelled, now absolutely petrified.

The Oracle lazily looked at the computer screen, when there was a green glow behind me.

I looked to find a large tank, glowing green.

"I have placed in the co-ordinates into the transporter, so it will take you to the Ark," the Oracle told me.

I didn't take a second look at it. I quickly opened the door to the tank and got in. The door closed behind me.

Suddenly the wall where the banging came from, fell apart. It revealed a disgusting creature with whip-like arms and no defined head. It seemed to be made up of different decaying creatures.

I stifled a scream as it lunged for the tank.

Suddenly, there was an almighty pressure that felt like every cell of my body was tearing apart. The pain was indescribable. My armor shattered around me as I disappeared into a white light.

I hit the ground with a thud. My head smacked against thick glass as I fell to my hands and knees. I panted for breath with pain and fear.

It took me several minutes to find the strength to open my eyes. When I did, I could see a dimly lit room. Similiar to the one I was just in with the Oracle, but colder.

It was freezing in this room. I leaned on the glass for support to stand up, when it swung open. I toppled out out of the tank onto a cold hard floor.

"Ow..." I murmured trying again to get up. I succeeded this time.

That's when I noticed my armor was missing. No wonder I felt cold. All I was dressed in was a tank top and 3/4 pants.

I felt vulnerable. No gun. No shield. No armor. No Spartan.

My body shook as I leaned back onto the tank.

Why had I been so stupid? Why hadn't I listened to Spartan in the first place? We probably would've found the Marines and gotten off that planet while we still could.

Thoughts of the Hunter incident rolled over in my head. Why did I go back? He is a lot stronger than me and would've easily killed it. But I had to help him. It was literally on top of him when I had ran out of the Ruins. In saving his life, I've doomed my own.

A little flicker of light caught my attention. I looked up to see a window to my left. I walked over to it and looked out.

It was a star. A blue giant. It was more than a million times larger than our Sun. We seemed to be orbiting it. But it was so cold in this room. And the heat from star should at least been felt from here.

I heard a swift noise behind me, then some hissing. I turned around to look for the sound, but found nothing.

I walked through the room listening to different hissing sounds.

"Hello?" I called, "Is anyone there?"

The hissing stopped.

I looked to my left to see a large computer screen. I walked over to it and studied the buttons intently.

After a couple of minutes, I had worked out how to switch it on.

The computer screen fizzled to life. I then began to get in contact with the General.

The General sat in his chair on the bridge of the space station looking at his fourth glass of whisky. Spartan and Rhea's team of Marines had returned, but had no idea how they did. Although Spartan and Rhea hadn't.

But he knew where Spartan was. The Arbiter, a rogue Elite and a small army of loyal aliens, that had joined forces with the human's, had found him on the planet they were searching and was now taking him to the Ark on board their vessel. But the Arbiter had said there was no sign of anyone else on the planet.

Major Rhea's armor had a small tracking device in it. But until about an hour ago, it stopped. Which meant her armor, and possibly her, were destroyed.

****BEEP BEEP****

The largest computer screen lit up revealing an alien code.

"Incoming transition from unknown co-ordinates," said one of the men working on the computer, "Do we wish to accept?"

The General nodded.

The screen lit up to reveal a woman's face. She had bright blue eyes and her brown hair had fallen out of its plait, making ringlets around her face. She seemed pained and exhausted.

"General! Thank god I got through to you," she said putting a weak smile on her face.

"Major? Where in heaven's name are you? Everyone thinks you're dead!" he replied standing up and putting his glass down.

"I'm on something called the Ark, sir. This piece of advanced technology, that called itself the "Oracle", sent me here. This technology is far beyond human comprehension," she replied bringing up some detailed pictures of certain alien devices.

She continued, "I never realised how much power was stored in this one structure. I have been trying to override it, but it seems to be written in a languages used and not used by us. Ancient Latin, Ancient Greek and Ancient Egypt seem to be the most prominent languages I can see, but there is a language I am not familiar with..."

"Major, will you need any assistance. If so, I will send the Master Chief to help," The General replied looking intently at something over Rhea's left shoulder.

The object seemed to act like smoke, but had a unusual shape to it. It seemed alive somehow.

"No sir, all I need is someway of getting off this Ark," she replied, oblivious to what was behind her.

"Then I will send a team to come retrieve you, just give me your co-ordinates and..." the General asked but stopped when the transmission started to falter.

"Major Rhea, do you respond. Repeat," he asked urgently.

Her voice crackled through.

"I'm here...sir...faulty...don't know why...wait...what are these...no... back...dont send...general...don't..."

The transmission cut out.

" Transmission ended. Try to regain contact sir?" asked the man operating the computer.

The General thought deeply for one moment, then replied, " No. Patch me through to the Master Chief, now."

5. Forbidden Knowledge

Chapter 5: Forbidden Knowledge

I woke druggily. I opened my eyes and looked around.

I was in some weird room. Strangely shaped dark blue walls with magenta lighting.

It seemed...Alien-like.

I sat upright quickly and realized I had been lying on a hard stretcher. My armor and weapons had been taken from me. It seemed somewhat cold in the room. I was still wearing my cargos and singlet top though.

I stood up and walked around the small room. My balance was a little off. It almost felt as if the room was moving.

Where was I? Last thing I remember was being in a warm liquid and a very sweet scent.

And Rhea...

Reality struck. She was dead. Because of me.

I leaned back against the wall nearby the bed.

Pictures of the look of fear on her face as she fell to her icy death flooded my mind.

Suddenly a door opened across the room, which I thought was a wall. I tensed.

An Alien entered the room. He was an Elite. But instead of wearing blue armor, he wore black.

I relaxed. "So you found me, Arbiter," I said casually.

The Arbiter somewhat grinned. (You couldn't tell...)

"You were lucky the Covenant didn't find you first. That would've been interesting to see..." the Arbiter replied quite amused.

I shook my head bemused.

"Can I have my stuff back now? I'm kinda freezing down there..." I asked knowing there was truth in those words.

The Arbiter walked over to another wall and pushed his hand against it. It glowed orange for one moment and then opened to reveal my armor, my weapon's and...

I stood up straight and walked to the compartment. I reached in and withdrew an alien sniper rifle. Rhea's sniper rifle.

The Arbiter looked over my shoulder and asked, "How did that come into your possession?"

I shook my head, not looking at him. "It's not mine. It's someone that was with me. On the planet."

"We found no other life form's on this planet except for you and your men that were stranded," he told me, "I would like to use that weapon to create more."

I turned and handed it to him. Rhea wasn't going to need it.

I started to pull on my armor while the Arbiter waited by the door.

When I finished, I walked over to the door to him.

"Follow me," he said stiffly, still clutching the sniper rifle in his hands.

I walked into a large room. Then I realized I was onboard a Alien ship.

The Arbiter handed Rhea's weapon to a Grunt and said a few alien words to him. The Grunt bowed and ran out of the room.

I walked to where the controls were. Two Elites in tarnished silver were steering the ship.

The Arbiter walked over aswell.

I looked at a map on a screen nearby.

Puzzled, I asked, "Where are we?"

The Arbiter leaned forward and pressed a spot on the screen. It immediately enlarged.

"We are deep within, what you human's call, a nebula. Horse-head nebula," he replied annoyed having to translate for me.

"Why?" I asked.

"Do you human's always have so many questions? We are heading for the Ark," he replied with little patience.

"The Ark? So you did find it. But why do you need me?" I asked suspiciously.

"We are not going to kill you, if that is what you are thinking," he replied, "It is just you have a better chance in destroying them."

"Them?" I repeated. (Please not the flood!)

"The Abyss. Invisible Beings that can reproduce and age quickly. Also, almost impossible to kill. The Covenant found some on the planet we found you, might explain the Hunter you encountered," he said side-looking at me.

Before I could say anything sarcastic, the monitor's screen changed to red.

"Incoming message. Arbiter?" asked one of the Elite's at the control panel.

"Accept," he replied.

The screen changed to show a older man. He sported several war scars on his face.

"General. It's good to see you," I told him.

"Good to see you too, Master Chief. Arbiter, we owe you our thanks," he replied formally.

The Arbiter merely nodded.

"Master Chief. I have some important news for you. It's in regards with Major Rhea 001," he said.

I felt my heart sink.

"She is alive. Master Chief," he continued, "I will replay her last transmission for you."

The screen changed again, but this time, Rhea's face was on the screen.

"I'm here...sir...faulty...don't know why...wait...what are these...no... back...dont send...general...don't...", her voice crackled through as her face disappeared from the screen.

"Wait! Where was she?" I asked urgently.

"On the Ark. The Oracle somehow transported her there. But there seems to be something else on board with her. Something not wanting us to find her," replied the General.

The Arbiter looked at me and said, "The Abyss."

"We are on our way there now, sir," I replied.

"Good luck, Master Chief," the General replied. His face disappeared from the screen to be replaced what looked like a gigantic blue star.

"A blue giant?" I asked looking at the Arbiter.

"Yes, the Ark seems to have been hidden very close within the star's gravitational pull," the Arbiter said, "but strangely, the pull at that height where the Ark is orbiting, should have either destroyed it or been pulled towards the star and burnt up in its atmosphere."

"Then why?" I asked.

"We do not know," the Arbiter replied flatly, "Come. You will need weapons."

"But I have weapons," I replied showing him my guns.

"You would not survive with those...weapons, against the Abyss," the Arbiter replied sharply and began walking out of the room.

I followed.

****Whoop...Whoop...Whoop...****

"What now?" I asked myself.

I had received my weapons from the Arbiter, which included a Plasma Rifle and an Energy Sword. I ****was**** just resting before the alarms had gone off.

I sat up and swung my legs off the bed and then stood up.

The ship seemed to be shuddering. The temperature seemed to have gotten warmer too.

Grabbing my weapons, I ran to the bridge.

The Arbiter stood near the control panel giving orders to the two Elites steering.

I walked over to him. He turned and looked at me.

"The ship is in the star's gravitational pull. The heat is quite intense even here. The Ark is about several miles toward's the star. I don't think this ship will sustain that long," the Arbiter told me.

"Maybe if we re-route the secondary power to the shields and the rest to the hyperdrive till we get there. Then you can make a jump to hyper-space as soon as I get out," I replied.

The Arbiter looked at me and asked, "How will you and your companion escape? That is, if she is still alive."

"She will be. I'll work it out when I get there," I replied, angered that he even suggested Rhea was dead.

"Very well," he said and then barked some orders in Alien language.

I started walking towards the hanger bay.

As I walked quickly, I felt the ship straining under the pressure of gravity and heat. It shuddered violently every so often, that I almost lost my footing several times.

When I arrived, I quickly walked towards the nearest Airlock door. I opened it and stepped inside. The door shut behind me. I stood facing the opposite door. The heat emanating from it, was incredible.

The Arbiter's voice suddenly came over the intercom inside the Airlock.

"We are nearing the Ark. Once you leave this ship, you are on your own," he said.

"I know," I replied.

The door in front of me suddenly opened. I grabbed a handle near the door to steady myself. The burning blue star far below, but if he was off by a little. He would fall to his death.

The Ark loomed nearby. It came closer and closer. As soon as we passed almost on top of it, I jumped.

The gravity pulled me down fast. I hit a platform hard, making a dint with my body. I stood up and looked for the Arbiter's ship. It had just finished powering up and then disappeared into a portal.

I moved slowly toward's the door of the Ark. (Plasma Rifle in hand of course.)

The door opened swiftly and silently as I approached it. I walked inside and the door closed quickly behind me. I walked through hallways, looking around corner's.

But nothing. I walked up ramps and went through some doors. Then I realized something. The temperature had dropped dramatically. The windows and walls seemed to have a thin layer of ice on them.

How could that be?

I woke stiffly. I willed my body to move, but found I could not.

It was cold. Frozen.

With what little strength I had, I managed to open my eyes.

My vision was slightly blurry.

I was still in the Ark's control room. My body was frozen to the wall. The ice had made enough room though to breathe.

When I could see properly, I felt movement around the room.

They were in here.

These invisible creatures that had surrounded me when I had transmitted to the General.

"I know you're in here. Please let me go. I have done nothing to harm you," I said almost in a whisper.

The movement seemed to gather towards each other. Maybe discussing.

Suddenly the computer screen lit up. The creatures hissed violently at it.

My jaw dropped. It was Spartan.

A security system had been alerted to his presence. He was looking for something. For me.

The creatures were now congregating around me. Invisible claws clutched my throat.

"I didn't bring him here!" I rasped, gasping for air," But if you let me go, we'll leave, ok?"

For several moments, the creatures hissed silently. And then the claws let go.

I took several deep breaths.

Suddenly a cold hand teared into my chest. The pain was so indescribable. It felt like it was tearing a hole in my soul. Suddenly it withdrew it's claw, but the pain throbbed. The invisible creature seemed to be holding a small ghostly white piece of...what was it?

The ghostly thing seemed to stretch. It grew legs, arms, a head. I gasped. It was me.

It was no longer a ghostly white, but fair skinned. It smiled at me.

"You said he would leave if we let you go to him," she said smartly.

I pulled against my bonds. No luck.

"No! He will never believe you are me!" I yelled at her.

"Hmm... he's just a male. He'll never know. Besides, there's no ship for him to leave on. So, I'm just going to let him walk out of an airlock," she laughed.

She walked towards the door. It opened, but before she left, she said, "Oh, and ah, by the way, don't think you're getting away. My friends will need something to keep them occupied."

Where is she?

This place was so huge. I couldn't even find the control room. Every room looked the same.

I had one floor left to check. I walked up the ramps and onto the top floor.

Suddenly I heard footsteps running in my direction. I hid behind a corner and peered around it.

It was Rhea.

I stepped out and called out to her, "Rhea? Is that you?"

"Master Chief!" she replied, "I'm so glad you're here!"

She didn't have her armor on, but she did look a lot healthier than she did when she transmitted to the General.

"Rhea, are you alright?" I asked, "Where are the Abyss?"

"Don't worry about them, they've been taken care of. Now let's get out of here," she said hurriedly grabbing my arm and trying to pull me in the opposite direction.

"Wait. The Ark. Has it been turned off?" I asked stopping her.

"Yes. But it is not as important as us getting out of here," she replied quite annoyed.

I looked at her and said, "Something's not right with you."

I pulled my arm away from her.

She looked at me angrily, "We are going to die if we stay here!"

I took a step back. She looked like Rhea, but something inside me told me she wasn't.

"I know you are not Rhea. Rhea doesn't call me Master Chief. Plus..." I told her pointing to the side of her neck, "Rhea, had a deep cut on her neck from an Elite. It would not of healed that quick."

She seemed worried now. She knew she had stuffed up. I pulled out my sword and teared through her. She screamed in agony. But no blood came from her. She started shrinking into something, like a piece of finely made cloth. It slowly drifted to the ground. I reached down, picked it up and pocketed it.

I quickly walked in the direction of where the fake Rhea had come from. The long hallway led me to a large door.

It opened quickly. Freezing air rushed from the room. I stepped through the door before it silently closed.

I looked around. Computer screens seemed to light up most of the room. A large vertical tank sat to my right.

But something caught my eye. There was something behind the tank. On the wall. It was distorted through the tank, so I took a step around.

There was someone frozen to the wall. Their head drooped down.

I was almost afraid to look. I dropped my guns and walked quickly to the them. I lifted their head gently and gasped.

It was Rhea. It was definately her. The small cut on her neck still encrusted with dry blood.

She murmered weakly.

"Rhea? Just hold on. I'll get you down," I told her.

I punched the ice near arms. The armor stopped any pain to me. The ice around her arms shattered and sent a reaction to the rest of the ice surrounding her body.

She fell forward suddenly and dropped onto the ground. I kneeled down and rolled her over.

She took several deep breaths before saying, " Spartan...is that you?"

She opened her eyes. I nodded. "Stay there, I'll disable the Ark," I told her and stood up.

"No!" she yelled sitting up quickly. Her body jerked back in pain.

"What do you mean?" I asked confused.

She leaned against a wall to help herself up. Clutching her chest, she then slowly walked to the computer. I followed.

"Why?" I asked standing next to her.

"They'll know. They'll come back. If I switch off the timer for the Ark, this station will fall toward's the star," she told me, "But i've noticed they don't like heat. That's why I was frozen to the wall. They weren't going to kill me, merely just keep me from killing them."

"So, if we do fall, then the heat will kill these creatures?" I asked.

"And us..." she replied sadly.

"Isn't there a way off here? Your clone said we could get off," I asked hopefully.

"She lied. She was going to kill you, but I knew you wouldn't believe her," she replied smiling at me.

I turned around hiding a smile. Then I looked at the vertical tank.

"What's that for?" I asked pointing at it.

Rhea turned around and looked. "The transporter! Of course!" She turned back to the computer excitedly, "If I get it to work than we can get out of here before..."

She stopped. "It needs a primary source of energy, but the only source of energy the Ark has is what is holding it up and the shields," she told me.

I looked at her and said, "How much time we got before we burn up?"

"Five minutes. Give or take a minute," she replied.

"Do it. I'll watch your back," I replied picking up my gun and aiming towards the door.

She nodded. Within seconds, the power cut out. The Ark leaned a bit as it began falling. The heat increased dramatically.

Suddenly the door opened. Black, twisted creatures more ghost than anything. Their skin, black and scaly. They had sharp fangs and holes for eyes with burning red pupils.

I began shooting at them. As each one died, more came.

"Are you ready yet?" I yelled to Rhea.

"Almost! I just have to put in the co-ordinates and...ah!" she screamed.

I turned to see the computer keyboard had surged and overloaded. Rhea stood there for several seconds with her hands on the keyboard. The electricity surged through her body. She was then flung back onto the

floor.

"Rhea!" I yelled still trying to kill the Abyss. The intense heat was also killing them too.

I looked at the computer screen. All it needed was a destination.

I ran to the computer and quickly thought.

I didn't know any co-ordinates.

I noticed there was some co-ordinates that had been used before. I dialed the last dialed numbers.

A bright green light shone from the Transporter. I kneeled down and grabbed Rhea before jumping into it. The door closed quickly. The Abyss seemed to be burning now.

Suddenly, an incredible pressure engulfed me and Rhea. Each cell, bone and organ ripping apart from each other. The last thing I remembered was disappearing in a white light.

6. Souls Of The Ancestors

****Preview Of The Next Story - Souls Of The Ancestors****

The General stood in front of a large room full of people. No one smiled. He cleared his throat and removed his hat.

He then spoke into the microphone.

"I would like to thank you for all attending, but we all wish that this was under better circumstances," he paused again, clearing his throat.

He continued, "We are to mourn the deaths of two heroes. These officers did not become heroes because of how many kills they made or how many lives they saved. They are heroes, because they sacrificed their own lives, for their job. Their job was to protect mankind. Because they have completed their mission, they are heroes. Once we finish our missions, we will be heroes

He lifted a glass of red wine from the table before him and lifted it into the air, before saying, "A toast. To Master Chief Spartan 117 and Major Rhea 001, may they protect those who need them, wherever they are."

Everyone lifted their glasses and murmured, "Amen."

****Thud...****

The guard standing near the secret vault in Atlantis' musuem jumped. He called to another guard nearby. The second guard called on a phone for the Curator.

Several moments later, a sharply dressed man with a balding head and a thick white mustache walked quickly to the vault.

With one nod from him, the two guards shuddered and opened the large

vault door.

The room contained secret ancient artifacts and was dimly lit.

The Curator walked swiftly into the room and stopped.

There was a man and a woman lying side by side on the floor.
Unconscious.

The ancient vertical tank's door was wildy ajar.

The Curator turned to the guards and said, "Get His Worship. The plan has changed."

End
file.